

APPROVED: _____

**MINUTES
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
September 9, 2009**

MEMBERS PRESENT: James LaRue, Jan Nelson, Ross Penhallegon, Kai Williams, and Jan Wroncy

MEMBERS ABSENT: John Sundquist

STAFF PRESENT: Orin Schumacher and Steve Smith

BCC PRESENT:

GUESTS PRESENT:

PUBLIC PRESENT:

Kai Williams called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m.

I. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Sundquist stated in an email (dated 09/09/09) that Items VI and VIII needed correction.

Motion: Williams moved to approve the July 8, 2009 minutes with corrections.

J. Nelson seconded the motion. **Vote:** All in favor. Motion passed.

III. GENERAL COMMENT

Williams opened the meeting for general comments.

J. Nelson asked if Howard Schussler had checked with County Counsel to see if the Road Fund could be used to have the road crews report illegal herbicide spray activity. She also asked about the duties of the botanist, if she could check for spray sites, and the position funding.

Schumacher responded that Howard Schussler was on vacation but that he'd check upon his return. Additionally, he explained that the botanist was hired as seasonal position to identify only T&E sites and that the position was funded by the Road Fund.

J. Nelson asked for clarification that only certain activities were allowed when using Road Fund monies, as it was not clear if identifying illegal spray sites could or could not be assigned to the road crews. She suggested road crews could identify illegal spray sites with their normal duties.

Williams & Schumacher answered that Howard Schussler had said that if there was a way to add that duty to the road crew's assignments that would be an incidental change to their workload, it would probably not be a problem. However, he did not consider it to be an incidental change.

Wroncy added that if people are illegally spraying it harms the T&E sites, illegal spraying encourages noxious weeds over normal vegetation, and suggested a relationship exists between the botanist's normal duties and discovering illegal spray sites.

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Penhallegon said that would change the duties of the botanist from biology to enforcement. J. Nelson said that it'd be identification not enforcement and that herbicide spray may be related. Williams said that it would be interesting and helpful to ask County Counsel for an opinion. Wroncy said it would save travel costs and time if the botanist or road crews could note those locations, possibly with a hand-held recorder to capture data and any observations. Williams asked if there were any additional comments.

J. Nelson asked if HB2424 was available. Schumacher provided copies to the group. Williams, Schumacher, J. Nelson, Penhallegon, and LaRue discussed adding the language for the pulling of noxious weeds and invasive plants to the Adopt-a-Road program as in the house bill. Schumacher added that additional equipment may be necessary if weed pulling added. Motion: Williams moved to request BCC to add pulling noxious weeds and invasive plants to the Lane County Adopt-A-Road program. J. Nelson seconded. **Vote:** All in favor. Motion Passed. Wroncy volunteered to take the issue to Commissioner Handy. Williams asked if there were any additional comments.

J. Nelson asked for details pertaining to a communication from Commissioner Handy, dated 09/09/2009, that was in response to a staff inquiry regarding the Delta Ponds project. Schumacher said the City of Eugene's project is to connect Delta Ponds with a path and to build a bicycle bridge over Delta Highway for wildlife and habitat protection. Blackberry population areas were removed, regrowth spot sprayed, and replanted by volunteers. He sent inquiry to the BCC to see if they'd permit the City's workers spraying control method on County property. J. Nelson asked if the work would be done by City workers not County workers. Schumacher said, yes, as the City has grants and volunteer groups to do the work, a permit would be required to work on the County right of way property, and BCC approval needed for chemical spray due to our moratorium or they could use approved manual methods. Williams asked if the spraying moratorium was lifted, wouldn't spraying still be prohibited as per the Last Resort Policy. Schumacher replied in the affirmative. Wroncy asked what the City sprayed in that area last year and who was the City contact. Schumacher replied that he hadn't seen their proposal, and that he'd been working with the Natural Resource Coordinator, Lauri Holts. Williams asked if there were any additional comments.

Wroncy expressed gratitude and positive comments for County staff's recent mowing of Horton and Clear Lake Roads. Williams said if there were no additional comments it was time to welcome new members.

IV. WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Schumacher welcomed Jan Wroncy back to the committee, introduced the other committee members and staff present, and informed her of the Springfield district vacancy.

V. ELECTION OF VMAC OFFICERS

Williams said that an election of officers was in order due to a quorum being present. Penhallegon nominated Kai Williams for chair citing her experience and knowledge. Williams accepted and asked for any other nominations. J. Nelson nominated Jan Wroncy for chair citing her experience and knowledge. She added that

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per the Good Governance Policy the chairperson should be able to devote time outside the meeting to set agendas, make necessary contacts with staff, and maintain communication with committee members. She asked if both nominees were able to meet those requirements. Wroncy accepted the nomination and stated that she was able to meet those requirements. Williams also stated that she would be able to meet those requirements.

Schumacher asked if the committee wanted a separate vote for the vice-chair position. Williams suggested holding one voice vote with the nominee receiving the most votes to be elected to the Chair position and the nominee receiving the fewer number of votes to be elected to the Vice-Chair position. The committee members agreed.

Vote: Three (3) for Williams (Penhallegon, LaRue, Williams) and two votes for Wroncy (Wroncy, J. Nelson). **Result:** Williams elected Chair and Wroncy elected Vice Chair.

Williams advised that the election period is only until her appointed term ends on January 31.

VI. AGENDA SETTING FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

J. Nelson asked about the committee's agenda setting process.

Schumacher explained that the committee sets its own agenda per the "Good Governance Policy" and added that the topic had been discussed for years.

J Nelson added that the committee's bylaws contain the same requirement.

Williams said that she liked the previously discussed agenda and work plan topics of Temperature of the Community, Tech Advisory, County Input, and Summary. They have not been fully implemented. She then explained what the topics meant to the new members.

Schumacher added that the committee sets its own agenda per Page 2 Section 1.b. of the "Good Governance Policy" dated January 7, 2009. He stated that means the Chairperson, with staff assistance, prepares the meeting agendas. All members agreed with his interpretation.

Wroncy suggested that new members be given a map of their district that shows County roads, UGB, and City streets. And that the number of roads will increase with the growing population.

Schumacher asked if this should be handled as a motion or as an individual request.

Penhallegon said it was previously decided to limit requests on staff's time.

LaRue said that he did not see the need for specific road information per district.

J. Nelson said she'd like to have a map of her appointing commissioner's district as she is not familiar with that area.

Wroncy added that agreements exist in her district between the City of Eugene and the County that determine maintenance responsibility. And that was another reason a map was needed.

Schumacher replied that agreements exist, for example, in the Santa Clara/River Road area, but that those agreements cover everything but vegetation.

Penhallegon volunteered to conduct a search of available resources for the desired information.

Williams suggested the agenda should always start with Public Comment, then Approval of Minutes and General Comments. All members agreed.

LaRue suggested the Road Maintenance Update agenda item should be dropped, as it is not useful to the committee. Penhallegon said he agreed with the suggestion.

Wroncy said planned road changes would be helpful.

LaRue added it impacts staff time but agreed that new road design information would be useful.

Wroncy suggested that the Vegetation Coordinator could provide road maintenance updates.

Schumacher said he could provide Vegetation Coordinator & Road Maintenance updates, with questions relayed to the Road Maintenance Manager as needed. All members agreed.

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Williams and the members discussed and determined that the Agenda will be as follows:

I. Public Comment, II. Approval of Minutes, III. General Comment, IV. Temperature of Community, V. Technical Advisory / Committee Advisory, VI. County Advisory, VII. Vegetation Coordinator & Staff Update, VIII. Work Plan Development, IX. Final Comment (Members/Public), X. Agenda Suggestions. Agenda sub items are allowed.

Wroncy asked what agenda item would cover subcommittee matters.

Williams responded there are no active subcommittees; however, they could be sub points of agenda items IV. or V. Members could contact her to add agenda items.

Williams said that she would develop the agenda, with members or staff input, and email the final agenda to staff no later than the first Wednesday of a meeting month. All members agreed.

Penhallegon added that most of the agenda will be set by the end of the meeting, but changes could be made as needed.

Wroncy said that the next scheduled meeting should be moved from November 11 due to the Veteran's Day holiday. (Agenda Item X.)

Motion: LaRue moved to move the next scheduled meeting to November 4 at the usual time.

Williams seconded the motion. **Vote:** All in favor. Motion Passed.

J. Nelson noted that the November meeting will be the last scheduled for the year. She asked when the end-of-year report was due.

Schumacher replied that report is due in the Fall, and that he will have it ready for review at the November meeting.

Wroncy asked if any committee positions will be open at the end of the year and will need to be dealt with at November meeting.

Schumacher said Kai Williams' position terminates January 31, 2010, so the January meeting will be the last. He added that he will post the position in the first part of November.

J. Nelson asked if the members would then review the position applications in January.

Schumacher answered, yes. The members would review and vote for new members, send the results to the BCC, and the new members could be present at the next meeting.

Williams asked if there were any topics to add under agenda items IV., V., or VI.

J. Nelson suggested the Annual Report be added under item VI.

Wroncy inquired as to the subcommittee status and if it had ended.

J. Nelson said that the public, not just committee members, can be on a subcommittee.

Williams said that there wasn't a subcommittee. A committee member just raised issues, as the committee did not have a quorum to establish or review subcommittees.

Schumacher suggested a report on subcommittees be scheduled for the next meeting.

Williams said it would be Agenda Item IV a. She then asked for any other agenda items.

LaRue asked about the Knotweed discussion. The members discussed educational outreach versus enforcement, that the committee cannot tell the public how to remove the weed, that posters should be obtained from available sources for member distribution with limited printing (20-30 copies), and that Ross Penhallegon could contact the media. Additionally, coordination with other agencies/groups was discussed, and English Ivy was discussed for a future outreach.

Motion: Williams moved to adopt Knotweed for the initial outreach, and that members should bring poster and suggestions to the next meeting.

Penhallegon seconded the motion. **Vote:** All in favor. Motion passed.

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J. Wroncy suggested an equipment tour be added to the next agenda.
Williams said that the equipment tour will be scheduled for thirty minutes after General Comment (Agenda Item III) for the next meeting.

J. Wroncy said a neighbor had constructed a fence in the County's right of way. She asked how Public Works would deal with that issue.

LaRue said that the fence issue should be reported to the County.

Schumacher said that nothing is allowed in the right of way without a permit, that a fence would not be permitted in the right of way, and that a stop work / non-compliance order can be posted after investigation by the zone manager. He added to report those problems to John Petsch.

VII. WORK PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Williams and the members reviewed the work plan for any changes.

Wroncy asked when new equipment would be needed and if it should be added to the work plan.

Schumacher replied that new equipment is always needed and not listed on the work plan.

Williams suggested adding the BCC recommendation to adopt HB2424 for Lane County.

J. Nelson asked if a board order needed to be written up for that recommendation.

Schumacher said that he could assist with the drafting of the board order.

Williams added that Jan Wroncy had volunteered to bring the issue to Commissioner Handy and his input should be obtained prior to taking any action or drafting the board order.

Williams and the members agreed to list the Noxious Weed Education/Knotweed as Item 1.b.

VIII. VEGETATION COORDINATOR UPDATE

Schumacher updated the North Game Farm Road project. He's working with Crest Meadows Homeowner's Association to deal with a one-half mile stretch, fence to sidewalk, overgrown area. Plan includes clean up, fill dirt, fabric cover, and adding bark layer. The homeowner's association will hire firm to weed every two months and add new bark every two years.

Penhallegon suggested applying black plastic for a year for clean up of the area.

Schumacher said they could apply the plastic and then bark it with hog fuel not beauty bark. He added that he'd appreciate any input on how to deal with this and other urban area problems.

Williams said that discussion could be added as a Technical Committee Advisory agenda item.

LaRue mentioned long term solutions such as gravel or asphalt.

Schumacher updated the guardrail project. Spring and Summer work done by crew, but will only get to approximately 30% of the system due to resources, weather conditions and growth.

J. Nelson and LaRue said that it was a wet season and they observed fast regrowth, too.

Schumacher added that they will continue with the Spring and Summer schedule, but that he might push them back a month to deal with the regrowth.

J. Nelson suggested goats to deal with the blackberries, if the area could be fenced off.

Schumacher said the Delta Ponds area contains a lot of good wildlife habitat, but maintaining those areas and the ramps/other areas is a challenge due to the blackberry growth.

J. Nelson added that birds dropping seeds can cause blackberry growth.

LaRue asked the purpose of the flags at the on ramp at Goodpasture Island Road.

Schumacher said the flags were an attempt to scare the birds from that area, after mowing, but met with limited success. He has had discussions with members of the public that do not want the Delta Pond area mowed, wanted a fence put up to protect the geese, and other concerns.

FINAL

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IX. ROAD MAINTENANCE MANAGER UPDATE

Deleted. See Agenda Item VI.

X. OTHER BUSINESS

Next Meeting date November 4, 2009. See Agenda Item VI.

Meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

Steve Smith
Recording Secretary